

REMARKS

I. Introduction

By the present Amendment, claims 1-13, 15, and 19 have been amended. No claims have been added or canceled. Accordingly, claims 1-24 remain pending in the application. Claims 1, 12, 20, and 24 are independent.

II. Office Action Summary

In the Office Action of November 23, 2005, claims 1-24 were rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph. Claims 1-24 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by either U.S. Patent No. 6,007,338 issued to DiNunzio or U.S. Patent No. 6,113,500 issued to Francis, et al. ("Francis"). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

III. Rejections under 35 USC §112

Claims 1-24 were rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter regarded as the invention. Regarding this rejection, the Office Action indicates that the claims appear to be generally narrative and fail to conform with current U.S. practice. Furthermore, the Office Action suggests that the claims appear to be literal translations of a foreign document into English. The Office Action provides citations to various instances of language that was considered indefinite and/or otherwise lacking in proper antecedent basis.

By the present Amendment, Applicants have reviewed the claims and made various changes in an effort to address the issues of indefiniteness raised in the Office Action. Applicants respectfully submit that, as amended, the presently pending claims are definite and include proper antecedent basis for the language recited therein.

IV. Rejections under 35 USC §102

Claims 1-24 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by either DiNunzio or Francis. Regarding this rejection, the Office Action indicates that both references disclose a ride simulation system that has a seat rocking unit, a video unit, an acoustic unit, and a simulation ride control apparatus. Furthermore, the Office Action asserts that since the claims do not recite any features of the distribution apparatus, the simulation ride control apparatus, and the computer software, then the devices disclosed by the cited art are capable of performing such functions. Applicants respectfully disagree.

The present invention is directed to a content distribution system for a ride simulation system. The system is intended, in part, to reduce the time and cost required to retrieve and renew content for a simulation system. As defined in independent claim 1, for example, a content distribution system for a simulation ride system comprises various structural components such as a seat rocking unit, a video unit, an acoustic unit, and a simulation ride control apparatus. A ride simulation system is provided for controlling movement of the seat, the rocking unit, the video unit, and the acoustic unit based on content data and a distribution apparatus. Furthermore, the distribution apparatus processes content data that is designed to include video data, acoustic data, and motion data. The distribution apparatus also

encrypts and stores the content data and distributes the content data in accordance with requests received from distributed parties.

The Office Action alleges that DiNunzio and Francis disclose the features of the claimed invention. DiNunzio appears to disclose a roller coaster simulator that has one or more passenger seats equipped with a safety harness and mounted for a 360° rotational movement along at least two axes for simulating the motion of a roller coaster. The system also allows passengers to design his or her own roller coaster. DiNunzio, however, appears to relate to the actual roller coaster simulator hardware and control system associated with the hardware. It does not appear to be concerned with content management and distribution of the actual simulation data. Similarly, Francis appears to disclose a 3D simulator amusement ride. The ride includes a motion base formed in a hexagonal pattern with up to six degrees of freedom of movement. A passenger enclosure is provided on the motion base and a 3D video system is attached for synchronization with movement of the enclosure. Francis also appears to be concerned only with the structure of the simulation apparatus and the number of degrees of freedom available for simulating the ride.

Neither DiNunzio nor Francis appears to disclose a system for control and distribution of content data to be used in conjunction with the ride control apparatus. More particularly, DiNunzio and Francis both fail to disclose "wherein said distribution apparatus for said ride content administration center has functions of processing content data defined to include video data reproduced by said video unit, acoustic data reproduced by said acoustic unit and motion data reproducing said seat rocking unit by said simulation ride control apparatus, encrypting and storing said content data, and distributing said content data in accordance with requests from distributed parties..."

It is therefore respectfully submitted that independent claim 1 is allowable over the art of record.

Claims 2-11 depend from independent claim 1, and are therefore believed allowable for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claim 1. In addition, these claims each introduce novel elements that independently render them patentable over the art of record.

Independent claim 12 defines a distribution apparatus for a ride content administration center. Claim 12 recites features that are somewhat similar to those recited in independent claim 1. For example, independent claim 12 recites the feature of "wherein the distribution apparatus has functions of processing content data defined to include video data reproduced by said video unit, acoustic data reproduced by said acoustic unit and motion data reproducing said seat rocking unit by said simulation ride control apparatus, encrypting and storing said content data, and distributing said content data in accordance with requests from distributed parties."

As previously discussed with respect to independent claim 1, this particular feature is not disclosed by the art of record.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that independent claim 12 is allowable over the art of record.

Claims 13-19 depend from independent claim 12, and are therefore believed allowable for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claim 12. In addition, these claims each introduce novel elements that independently render them patentable over the art of record.

Independent claim 20 defines a simulation ride control apparatus for controlling the operation of a seat rocking unit, a video unit, and an acoustic unit belonging to a ride simulation system using content data. The apparatus is configured to receive distributed content data for purposes of enabling the simulation ride system to perform the desired simulation.

As previously discussed, DiNunzio and Francis appear to be concerned only with the actual structure and control of the devices used for constructing the simulation system. These references do not appear to be concerned with receipt and distribution of content data for purposes of enabling the actual simulation.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that independent claim 20 is allowable over the art of record.

Claims 21-23 depend from independent claim 20, and are therefore believed allowable for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claim 20. In addition, these claims each introduce novel elements that independently render them patentable over the art of record.

Independent claim 24 relates to computer software that is usable in a distribution apparatus for a ride contents administration center. The software includes instructions that allow a computer to execute various functions related to distributing the content data and receiving the content data thereby allowing a ride simulation control apparatus to perform a desired simulation. Again, the applied references appear to be concerned only with the actual apparatus used to perform the simulation and do not disclose any method for receiving, distributing, or applying content data that is received from a remote source.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that independent claim 24 is allowable over the art of record.

V. Conclusion

For the reasons stated above, it is respectfully submitted that all of the pending claims are now in condition for allowance. Therefore, the issuance of a Notice of Allowance is believed in order, and courteously solicited.

If the Examiner believes that there are any matters which can be resolved by way of either a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the number indicated below.

AUTHORIZATION

Applicants request any shortage or excess in fees in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, and for which no other form of payment is offered, be charged or credited to Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (Case: 500.40581X00).

Respectfully submitted,
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